do is set down on paper a few poems that you can't keep to yourself? . . , When I read them to Verhaeren, he wouldn't believe that I was not accustomed to writing. . . . But why should I write? This is what I ask myself every day in front of my sheet of paper: Who would be interested in this?*' (And repeating her sentence with an accent on each syllable): "Who would be interested in this?—Who could be interested in it? . . " (Obviously she is waiting for me to reply: "Why—perhaps I would," but since I remain silent, she becomes more precise): ^Come, Monsieur Gide, I ask you."

Then B., coming to her aid: <cWhen the emotion is sincere . . ."

And she: "Oh, as for the sincerity! . . . In fact it's very odd: I begin without knowing what I shall write; when I reread, it's always lines of poetry; I write in rhythm despite myself; yes, I can't do anything about it, everything I write is in rhythm. M. Gide, I wish you would tell me: do you think it's possible to achieve anything by work and pruning? . . .

Here, somewhat stupidly, I try to establish a distinction between the two words, suggesting that "*work* does not necessarily imply *pruning*" But I am not understood and it is better to skip it. The conversation starts off again on a new track

"Do you know Verhaeren very well? What a charming conversationalist! Have you heard him tell stories? Ah! the other day at Saint-Cloud we spent the whole day telling each other stories. . . . Indeed, that is one of the things that have encouraged me to write. *It would be criminal not to write up these recollections!* he told me. That was after I had just told him about my grandfather's death. . . . Just imagine, two coffins had been ordered! Yes, two coffins; the maid had made a mistake. . . . That morning two dealers arrived, each one with his coffin; of course there followed a heated dialogue; you can guess that, despite the circumstances, each one could hardly keep from laughing. One was

pointing out the quality of the wood, the other the comfort of his cushions. Finally I remember that my uncle managed to get rid of one of them, who said to him as he left: Til take the coffin away, but I see that you will need it soon/ Do you too think that I ought to write this up? . . . Verhaeren claims that in Brittany lie saw this sign in a shop window: 'Hygienic coffins. . » .* But X." (I don't remember what important name she used), "who was with us, exclaimed: With poets you never know where reality ends. . . ." It's like this other memory he liked so much. . . . Just imagine that I had got into the habit of buying a bouquet of flowers every morning from a little Paris urchin *of* about fourteen who was always in the same spot According to the season it was violets or mimosa. . . * This lasted two years. Finally (me day I was unable to go out, but a friend of mine who knew the urchin gave him my address so that he could take the bouquet to me. I see tibe